

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4955

1. Name

Historic 8 – 20 North Bruce Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 8 – 20 North Bruce Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

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7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check One

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check One

☒ original site
☐ moved:
date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of seven two-story, two-bay wide brick houses with shed roofs and sheet metal cornices were built c. 1895 – 1900. With their high basement containing the kitchen, the houses are typical of a form found particularly in southwest Baltimore. All of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were always painted. The row has been completely renovated in recent years.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide and occupy lots 50' deep. Each house is two rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in common bond and were originally painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the rear corner of the house. The shed roofs are capped by a simple sheet metal cornice.

The tall, narrow window and door openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, composed of a double row of headers, and stone sills. All of the houses have 1/1 replacement sash. Doorways have single-light transoms, and all doors are modern six-panel doors. The houses sit on high basements, lit by a single-light sash. Steps lead down from the sidewalk to the basement door. Each house is reached by five or six concrete steps, set parallel to the street.

8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates c. 1895 - 1900

Builder/Architect

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This group of houses significant as representing the level of architectural stylishness builders were willing to give to small street houses in the late nineteenth century and is testament to the fact that there was no stigma attached to small street living. They represent a form of house particular to southwest Baltimore—only two rooms deep with the kitchen located in the basement—a design that allowed builders to build on much shorter lots. The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period c. 1870 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and northeast and southwest of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide three-bay-wide, two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-bay-wide, two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$700 - \$900.

Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the approximately \$750 purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the \$8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

The houses are especially significant because of their proximity to the slaughterhouses of southwest Baltimore and their related industries, particularly the William Wilkens & Co. Curled Hair Manufactory, one of the largest employers in the area. A number of German-American owned breweries were also located in this section of the city. Moderately-priced housing was built to provide homes for the mainly German immigrants who came to southwest Baltimore to work in these rapidly expanding industries in the decades after the Civil War.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023

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B-4955

8-20 N. Bruce St.
BALTO. MD

175

147

170

LANSDOWNE ST.

ST.

PENROSE 163 AVE

185

N. MONROE

177

180

GARRETT PARK
M.E. CH.

ST. 178

N. FULTON

160

ST. 193

ST. MARTIN'S
ACADEMY FOR
YOUNG LADIES

ST.

66

BRUCE

ST. MARTIN'S
CATH. CHURCH

ST. MARTIN'S
ACADEMY

BAPT. CHURCH

N. MOUNT

140

ST. 195

VINE-FAYETTE

W FAYETTE ST

ADDISON ST

W FAIRMOUNT AVE

FAIRMOUNT-BALTIMORE

N FULTON AVE

N BRUCE ST

BRUCE MOUNT

FULTON AVE

N MOUNT ST

N VINCENT ST

VINCENT-GILMOR

N GILMOR ST

W BALTIMORE ST

BOOTH ST

S FULTON AVE

S MOUNT ST

S VINCENT ST

HOLLINS ST

S GILMOR ST

PAYSON-MONROE

N MONROE ST

S MONROE

BOOTH ST

B-4955

GIS data Courtesy of
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS

This is a detailed black and white map of a section of New York City, specifically the area around Harlem and the Hudson River. The map shows a grid of streets including Franklin Street, Mulberry Street, Lexington Avenue, and Central Avenue. Key landmarks such as Bon Secours Hospital, St. Paul's Cemetery, and the Edgar Allan Poe Home are labeled. A specific location is marked with a white box and labeled 'B-4955'.



B-4955

8-20 N Bruce St

BALTO, MD

W. Wild

6/10

MD SHPD

111